

# ICW Statement

## *ICW Women Living with HIV – High Level Meeting Consultation Outcome*

### **WHAT WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV WANT!**

In preparation for the upcoming High Level Meeting on Ending AIDS (HLM), to be held from **June 8-10, 2016** in New York City, the International Community of Women living with HIV (ICW) conducted a process of consultation with our members around the world including meetings, reviewing regional positions, one-on-one dialogues, and an online survey of its members to understand better what women living with HIV want to see prioritized in the HLM Outcome Document and in country commitments. The consultation process was an important avenue to hear the voices and perspectives of women living with HIV from around the world.

In the weeks leading up to the High Level Meeting, ICW is working with our allies including International Council of AIDS Organizations (ICASO) and International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC) to ensure that our voices are heard in the negotiations around developing the HLM, which will guide and monitor the HIV and AIDS response towards achieving the end of the AIDS epidemic by 2030; and towards realizing the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals. A zero draft (<http://www.icaso.org/files/zero-draft-un-ga-political-declaration-on-hiv-aids-2016>) of the was released by the UN on April 18, 2016. It will be negotiated by advocates, policymakers, and governmental officials over the coming weeks leading up to the HLM.

### **ICW Calls on Governments and Key Stakeholders to:**

#### **Commit to Gender Equality!**

Governments must:

- Create a gender-responsive policy that takes a human rights-based approach to the HIV response;
- Implement programming priorities and funding that recognize gender discrimination as a barrier to a successful HIV response;
- Recognize and invest in community engagement of women living with HIV as central to the success of the HIV response;
- Commit to mobilize resources, especially at community level, and fully fund and support robust community participation including peer-led research.

## End Discrimination and Criminalization!

Governments must:

- Eliminate adverse laws and policies including criminalization of HIV transmission which continue to impede HIV prevention and treatment, and the criminalization of key populations like women who use drugs and sex workers; strengthen commitments already written in the *Outcome Document* to reject overly broad criminalization of HIV as well as to reform punitive legal policies and frameworks aimed at people living with HIV.

## Prioritize Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights!

Governments must:

- Recognize women's autonomy over their bodies, and that gender discrimination is a barrier to ending AIDS by 2030;
- Keep all language regarding sexual health and reproductive rights and comprehensive sexuality education currently in the *Outcome Document*, and add commitments to reducing violence against women, especially in conflict settings;
- Recognize that sexual health and reproductive rights encompasses abortion on demand, clear guidelines on breastfeeding for women living with HIV, freedom from forced and coerced sterilization, rights-based PMTCT programs, as well as increased commitment and investment to ending maternal mortality; these must be reflected as priorities in the *Outcome Document*;
- Recognize that women living with HIV are not only mothers, but we are also independent human beings, who are also deserving of their full human right including sexual, reproductive and health rights and access to treatment care and support.

### A call to women living with HIV prior to and during the HLM:

- Find out who will represent your country at the HLM, and reach out (write a letter to your UN mission and, if possible, join the delegation!);
- Meet with your country delegation to share ICW's priorities for the HLM *Outcome Document*;
- Share information with one another, and become part of the ICW HLM working group.

Let us know if you are going to the HLM! Read the **Zero Draft** (<http://www.icaso.org/files/zero-draft-un-ga-political-declaration-on-hiv-aids-2016>) and share your thoughts with **Katie Filous** at [legalfellow@iamicw.org](mailto:legalfellow@iamicw.org)

## NOTHING FOR US WITHOUT US!

For more information please visit: [www.iamicw.org](http://www.iamicw.org)

The International Community of Women Living with HIV, the first and only global network by and for women and girls living with HIV, has worked for over 20 years to address and support the challenges of, as well as collectively celebrate, all self-identifying women and girls living with HIV throughout the world.



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